

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated September 6, 2006. Claims 1 to 36 are pending in the application, of which Claims 1 to 11, 20, 21, 23, 24, 30 to 32, 35 and 36 are withdrawn and Claims 26, 33 and 34 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 12 to 19, 22, 25 to 29, 33 and 34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,815,764 (Tomory). Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

The present invention concerns an image recording apparatus which can connect with a sheet processing apparatus having plural storage units capable of storing sheets. The image recording apparatus can receive a first-type job in which group-name information commonly utilized by the plural storage units is not set and a second-type job in which group-name information is set. If the image recording apparatus receives a second-type job in which group-name information is set, the image recording apparatus records the same page of the image data of the job a number of times corresponding to the number of members specified by the group-name information included in the job and distributes the same recording result to the plural storage units allocated to the plural members specified by the group-name information.

Turning to specific claim language, amended independent Claim 26 is directed to an image recording apparatus which can connect with a sheet processing apparatus having plural storage units capable of storing sheets. The apparatus includes reception means for receiving data including image data from a remote data processing apparatus; image recording means for recording an image based on the received image

data, on a sheet; and control means for performing control, according as first data instructing to distribute the sheets to the storage unit belonging to which of plural groups of the grouped storage units is included in the data received from the remote data processing apparatus, to distribute the sheets on which the image data from the remote data processing apparatus has been recorded to the storage unit belonging to the group according to the first data. The control means causes the image recording apparatus to execute more than once the recording of the same page of image data of a second-type job and causes the image recording apparatus to distribute a record result obtained by the recording to plural storage units of the sheet processing apparatus, in a case where the second-type job is accepted by the image recording apparatus from a first-type job in which the first data is not set and the second-type job in which the first data is set. The first data is group-name information commonly utilized by the plural storage units, and the control means causes the image recording apparatus to execute the recording of the same page of the image data of the second-type job by the number of times corresponding to the number of members specified by the group-name information included in the second-type job, and causes to distribute the same recording result obtained by the recording to the plural storage units allocated to the plural members specified by the group-name information included in the second-type job.

In contrast, Tomory merely discloses routing prints of a copy job developed on a digital copier to an alternate output destination when the copier is busy processing a print job, (column 15, lines 57 to 67 and column 16, lines 34 to 37 of Tomry). While Tomory discloses allowing the developer of a copy job to specify a private mailbox bin as the alternate output destination, (column 17, line 44 of Tomory), Tomory is silent on an

image recording apparatus selectively receiving from a remote data processing apparatus a first-type job in which first data of instructing distribution of an output target is not set and a second-type job in which the first data is set. Moreover, Tomory is silent on first data being group-name information commonly utilized by plural storage units. Finally, Tomory is silent on recording the same page of image data of a second-type job a number of times corresponding to the number of members specified by the group-name information included in the second-type job, and distributing the same recording result to the plural storage units allocated to the plural members specified by the group-name information included in the second-type job. Thus, Tomory does not disclose or suggest all of the features of amended independent Claim 26

In light of the deficiencies of Tomory as discussed above, Applicant submits that amended independent Claim 26 is now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

Amended independent Claims 33 and 34 are directed to a method and a computer-readable medium, respectively, substantially in accordance with the apparatus of Claim 26. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claims 33 and 34 are also now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed allowable for the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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